

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 DECEMBER 2019

At the meeting of the Sprowston Town Council held at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston on Wednesday 4 December 2019, the following Members were present: -

Mr J M Ward – Town Mayor

Mr M G Callam	-	Mrs B J Lashley
Ms D Coleman	-	Mrs J Leggett
Mrs B Cook	-	Mr J H Mallen
Mr W F Couzens	-	Mr I J Mackie
Mr J F Fisher	-	Ms C T Rumsby
Mr R J Knowles	-	Mr S C Walker

In attendance

Mr G Ranaweera	-	Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Mrs E Elliot	-	Committee Officer

3 members of the public were present

19/308. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

Member	Minute No. and Heading	Nature of Interest
Mrs B J Lashley	Minute 19/313 (b)	Chairman of the Senior Citizens Bowls Club
Mrs J Leggett	Minute 19/314	Sprowston Youth Engagement Project (SYEP)
Ms C T Rumsby	Minute 19/314	SYEP

19/309. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Mr A J Barton.

19/310. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

On the motion of Mr J M Ward, seconded by Mr W F Couzens it was **RESOLVED**, that the meeting be adjourned to receive residents' questions on matters concerning the town. Residents were reminded that their questions should be addressed to the Town Mayor who would, assisted by the Town Clerk, reply.

Mrs Laws of Lowry Cole Road commented on the lack of seating at bus stops. Her nearest stop was Edwards Road which was used by a lot of elderly people who could not stand for any length of time, particularly after a long walk to get there.

Mr Ward responded that seating would be included in future bus stops purchased by the Council subject to budget constraints and sufficient space being available.

19/310. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

The Town Clerk advised that the 2020/21 budget included funding for installation of seats at the bus stop at Edwards Road / North Walsham Road.

Mr Moore reported seating was too high in a number of bus stops for some elderly and disabled people.

The meeting was reconvened.

19/311. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

1.1 No matters were reported

CEMETERY

2.1 Replacement mini-tractor

Members considered two quotations for a replacement mini-tractor and the Town Clerk answered questions as follows:

- (1) there were no quality issues with the ernestDOE, it was fortuitous timing as they had a surplus stock tractor ready to sell.
- (2) the John Deer would have at minimum a one-year warranty.
- (3) the Head Grounds man had been consulted and confirmed either tractor would be suitable.
- (4) ernestDOE had recently purchased Bartram's Mowers.

Mr M G Callam proposed, seconded by Mr J M Ward the Council accept the quotation from ernestDOE for supply of one TXG237 Iseki Tractor at a total cost of £7,195.00 plus VAT including trade in

on being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

STREET LIGHTING

3.1 Streetlighting Replacement Programme (Business Plan item)

This item was taken under Minute 19/315.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

4.1 Christmas Opening Times

Mrs B J Lashley proposed, seconded by Mr R J Knowles to agree the Christmas opening times suggested in the Town Clerk's report and the Council office and grounds maintenance close at 12 noon on Tuesday 31 December 2019 in recognition of the hard work of Council staff.

19/311. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)

On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

5.1 Bus Shelters: Priority Replacement of Shelter on North Walsham Road opposite Pioneer Road

Members considered three quotations for a replacement bus shelter on North Walsham Road, opposite Pioneer Road.

The Town clerk reported that quotation 3 on the pink pages was higher as it referred to a bigger shelter than required. The quotation for a 3-metre shelter was £6,785.00 plus VAT.

In response to questions the Town Clerk clarified that the bus stop would be setback behind the pavement and that quotation 1 did indeed include hardstanding.

Mrs B J Lashley suggested that bench seating was preferable to perch seating and should be of a suitable height. She also asked if there was a rail to help people stand.

The Town Clerk advised that it was not standard in installation.

Mr W F Couzens suggested an upright pole however, this would reduce available seating.

Mrs B J Lashley queried if access was big enough for a powered wheelchair or scooter.

It was agreed that this be considered when ordering future bus stops.

Mr M G Callam proposed, seconded by Mr J M Ward quotation 3 for a 3-metre shelter, subject to the provision of bench seating and it was

RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Westcotec at a cost of £6,785.00 plus VAT.

ATTACHMENTS

- 6.1 Quotation 1 for new Tractor**
- 6.2 Quotation 2 for new Tractor**
- 6.3 Quotation 1 for replacement bus shelter**
- 6.4 Quotation 2 for replacement bus shelter**
- 6.5 Quotation 3 for replacement bus shelter**

19/312. PLANNING

The Town Clerk reported that observations had been requested by the District Council's Head of Planning on applications received since the last meeting.

Having considered each application and the accompanying plans the Council

RESOLVED

- (a) to oppose the granting of planning application 2019/1795 - extension to side at 156, Wroxham Road on the grounds that it is an over development of the site, out of character with the street scene and an unneighbourly form of development.
- (b) to oppose the granting of planning application 2019/1776 - subdivision of curtilage & erection of 2 no. semi-detached dwellings & associated access at 52, Blackwell Avenue on the grounds that it is an over development of the site and lacks amenity space.
- (c) to oppose the granting of planning application 2019/1803 - replacement dwelling, garaging and new garden wall at 3, Park Cottages, Wroxham Road on the grounds that it is an inappropriate dwelling within its setting and out of keeping with surrounding properties.

19/313. TO REVIEW FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2020/21

(a) Cemetery and Memorial Fees

RESOLVED that effective 1 April 2020 a 3% (rounded) increase be applied to all cemetery and memorial fees.

(b) Sports Hire Fees

RESOLVED that effective 1 April 2020 a 3% (rounded) increase be applied to block booking bowls and senior football. All youth and casual fees to remain unchanged.

(c) Venue Hire Fees

RESOLVED that effective 1 April 2020:

- (1) a separate corporate rate be introduced;
- (2) part day fees be deleted except for Beryl Read Sports Hall (9.00am - 12.00am);
- (3) Town Clerk to have flexibility to offer a day rate for hire of Sprowston Pavilion;
- (4) Photocopy Fees and all other non-corporate fees remain unchanged.

(d) Allotment Rents and Water Charges

RESOLVED that effective 1 October 2020 allotment rents for 2020/21 be increased to £38.00 per annum, and water charges to £8.00 reflecting previous year's billed usage.

19/314. DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2020/21

The Town Clerk reported Broadland District Council had sent revised Tax Base figures and referred Members to an updated Summary Income & Expenditure Budget by Budget Heading tabled at the meeting.

The Town Clerk was requested to ask the District Council why the Tax Base had been reduced and to compare the current figure with last years to establish the difference.

Referring to Administration - Cost Centre 6001, Mrs B J Lashley queried why the wages and salaries budget had been decreased for 20/2021.

The Town Clerk explained that the 2019/20 budget had to accommodate Mrs J Hunt as Town Clerk and himself as Town Clerk designate for several months.

With regard to Grants - Cost Centre 5307, Mrs B J Lashley asked if the £10,000 allocated to SYEP had been agreed and if this was in addition to the £5,000 previously agreed. If so, she felt that a donation of £15,000 to one organisation in a year was a lot of money.

The Town Clerk confirmed that these amounts had been included in the Business Plan.

Mrs B J Lashley expressed an interest in SYEP's proposal, if there were other contributors to funding an outreach worker, whether Sprowston Town Council's contribution was proportionate and if this would be an annual contribution.

Mr W F Couzens referred to comments on social media made by residents concerned about anti-social behaviour by young people, suggesting that funding of an outreach worker was trying to improve this situation.

Mr I J Mackie commented that Council did not have to use the £10,000 allocation and could remove it later if desired.

Mr W F Couzens queried why the bus shelter on North Walsham Road, opposite Pioneer Road, was more expensive than those suggested in the proposed budget.

The Town Clerk replied that the space available at this location allowed for a more substantial structure to better suit the needs of users.

A resolution on the budget was deferred for consideration of Minute 19/315.

19/315. LOAN SCHEDULE AND OPTIONS FOR FUNDING STREET LIGHTING REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

The Town Clerk explained his recommendation to pay off in full loans 498274 - Cemetery Extension, 491908 - Machine Store, 489751 - Bowls Pavilion and 499163 - Renovations at School Lane from the capital fund, currently around £142,000. This would reduce the annual loans repayment by approximately £27,337.16 and generate a revenue saving which could be used to fund a new Public Works Loan to implement a streetlight replacement programme, should Council so wish.

On the motion of Mr I J Mackie, seconded by Mr S C Walker it was

19/315. LOAN SCHEDULE AND OPTIONS FOR FUNDING STREET LIGHTING REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME (CONTINUED)

RESOLVED to repay in full loans 498274, 491908, 489751, 499163 at a total surrender value of £142,097.39 as of 26 November 2019.

The Town Clerk then referred Members to streetlight replacement programme funding and streetlight survey advising there were no units in the red category but further detail could not be established for those 448 units in the amber category.

A loan of approximately £520,000 would be needed to cover the cost of the Streetlight Replacement programme and Members considered six borrowing options from the Public Works Loan Board.

It was suggested that the Streetlight replacement programme be phased.

The Town Clerk advised that columns could be replaced in phases over several years commencing with the oldest ones and loan funds allocated to future phases would be invested in a high interest rate account.

The Town Clerk confirmed that because of the amounts involved, the replacement programme would need to go out to tender.

Mr J M Ward proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam option 2, Annuity over 25 years and on being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

Members then returned to consideration of the Draft Revenue and Capital Expenditure Programme 2020/21.

Mr I J Mackie proposed, seconded by Mr J F Fisher Option D a 5.79% increase in the precept, on the previous year, equating to a 5.00% increase in the charge on a band D property based on an estimated Tax Base for 2020/21 of 5,600 and on being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

19/316. PRECEPT 2020/2021

RESOLVED to authorise the Town Clerk to submit, under Section 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, a precept requirement to Broadland District Council of £688,011 to meet the Council's funding requirement for 2020/21.

There being no other necessary business the Town Mayor of the Council thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

18 December 2019

Town Mayor